

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LIMA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 127441

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OCON, OAS, SPECCOM

SUBJECT: OAS SPECIAL COMMITTEE PROPOSALS FOR REALIGNING
COUNCILS

FOR: US DELEGATION TO SPECCOM

1. THE DEPARTMENT WISHES TO SHARE WITH YOU SOME PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS ON PROPOSALS TO REALIGN THE COUNCILS OF THE OAS, ESPECIALLY AS THEY AFFECT THE PERMANENT COUNCIL AND RELATIONS BETWEEN OR AMONG THE COUNCILS AND WITH THE SECRETARIAT AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY. AS AN EXAMPLE AND DEPARTURE POINT, WE CITE PERU' S PROPOSAL TO REPLACE THE PRESENT THREE- COUNCIL STRUCTURE WITH TWO INDEPENDENT COUNCILS HEADQUARTERED IN TWO DIFFERENT LATIN AMERICAN CAPITALS - A COUNCIL FOR DEVELOPMENT AND A COUNCIL FOR POLITICAL AND JURIDICAL AFFAIRS. WE GATHER THAT PERU' S PROPOSAL IS THAT THE TWO COUNCILS WOULD OPERATE ENTIRELY SEPARATELY, ALTHOUGH BOTH WOULD BE SUBJECT TO THE POLICY GUIDANCE OF AN ANNUAL, MINISTERIAL- LEVEL GENERAL ASSEMBLY;

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AND THAT EACH WOULD HAVE ITS OWN SEPARATE SECRETARIAT STAFF, EXCEPT THAT THE SECRETARY GENERAL AND HIS CENTRAL SECRETARIAT STAFF (LOCATED WHERE?) WOULD SOMEHOW HANDLE ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS. WHILE THIS IS OF COURSE ONLY ONE PROPOSAL, WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE ASPECT OF A SINGLE COUNCIL FOR DEVELOPMENT, ESSENTIALLY COMBINING THE FUNCTIONS OF THE PRESENT CIES (IA- ECOSOC) AND CIECC, MAY APPEAL TO SOME OTHER MEMBERS -- E. G. BRAZIL' S SUGGESTION WHICH, HOWEVER, DOES NOT SEEM TO EMBRACE THE OTHER ASPECTS OF PERU' S PROPOSAL.

2. FOR THE MOMENT WE ARE OPEN- MINDED ABOUT THE CONCEPT OF A SINGLE COUNCIL FOR DEVELOPMENT, SETTING ASIDE THE QUESTIONS OF SEPARATION OF OPERATIONS, SECRETARIAT AND HEADQUARTERS. WE ARE AT PRESENT ENGAGED IN STUDYING THE MATTER IN GREATER DEPTH AND WILL LET YOU HAVE THE RESULTS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

3. WE HAVE REAL PROBLEMS, HOWEVER, WITH PERU' S PROPOSAL FOR THE OPERATIONAL AND PHYSICAL SEPARATION OF THE TWO COUNCILS. GIVEN THE EXISTING PROBLEMS OF COORDINATION AMONG THE THREE COUNCILS, PERU' S PROPOSAL WOULD OBVIOUSLY SOLVE THE PROBLEM BETWEEN CIES AND CIECC BUT WOULD GREATLY INTENSIFY IT WITH RESPECT TO THE OTHER COUNCIL, WHATEVER ITS NAME. COMMON POLICY GUIDANCE BY AN ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY WOULD HARDLY SEEM SUFFICIENT, AND THE COORDINATION ROLE GIVEN TO THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE BY THE LAST OASGA WOULD BECOME INOPERABLE. ADDITIONALLY, THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE' S BASIC ROLE IN PREPARING FOR EACH OASGA WOULD BECOME SUBSTANTIALLY MORE DIFFICULT, AND THE COMPOSITION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE ITSELF WOULD BECOME A MOOT POINT. MOREOVER, WE CONTINUE TO FAVOR A UNITED SECRETARIAT (WHICH DOES NOT PRECLUDE BRANCH OFFICES) HEADED BY A STRONG SECRETARY GENERAL. THUS, WHILE WE WOULD NOT OPPOSE A SHIFT IN OAS HEADQUARTERS TO A LATIN AMERICAN CITY IF A CONSENSUS SHOULD DEVELOP FOR THIS, WE WOULD ADVOCATE MAINTAINING THE PRINCIPAL COUNCILS (WHETHER THREE OR TWO) AND SECRETARIAT HEADQUARTERS IN ONE LOCALITY.

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4. WE HAVE OTHER BASIC PROBLEMS WITH PERU' S PROPOSAL FOR AN ISOLATED COUNCIL FOR POLITICAL AND JURIDICAL AFFAIRS, PRESUMABLY REPLACING THE PRESENT PERMANENT COUNCIL. PERU' S IDEA OF THE COMPLETE SEPARATION OF THE TWO COUNCILS AS WELL AS THE DESIGNATION " POLITICAL AND JURIDICAL " SEEM TO MEAN THAT THE LATTER COUNCIL WOULD CEASE TO HAVE THE PERMANENT, CENTRAL ROLE OF THE

PRESENT PERMANENT COUNCIL -- A ROLE THAT WE HAVE LONG FELT SHOULD BE AUGMENTED AND CERTAINLY NOT ELIMINATED. MOREOVER, UNDER PERU' S SCHEME THE PERMANENT COUNCIL WOULD APPARENTLY CEASE TO SERVE AS PREPARATORY COMMITTEE, AND THE COORDINATING FUNCTIONS GIVEN TO THE LATTER WOULD BE LEFT IN LIMBO. IF THE INTENT IS TO REDUCE THE COUNCIL TO PURELY POLITICAL AND JURIDICAL AFFAIRS (E. G. PEACEKEEPING AS PROVISIONAL ORGAN OF

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CONSULTATION, PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT, MEMBERSHIP, JURIDICAL QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE IAJC) THE COUNCIL WOULD AS A PRACTICAL MATTER CEASE TO BE TRULY " PERMANENT" AND WOULD SIMPLY BE " ON CALL" TO ATTEND TO SUCH PROBLEMS IF AND WHEN THEY AROSE, SOMEWHAT LIKE THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL BUT WITH FAR FEWER CASES TO DEAL WITH. A SUBSIDIARY PROBLEM WOULD ARISE OF MAINTAINING DELEGATIONS TO A COUNCIL HAVING SUCH NON- PERMANENT FUNCTIONS. THE ONLY PLUS WE CAN SEE IN THE PERUVIAN IDEA IS THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT THE COUNCIL (AND HENCE THE OAS) DOES HAVE POLITICAL FUNCTIONS -- A REALITY THAT SO MANY LATIN AMERICAN DELEGATIONS HAVE IN THE PAST BEEN RELUCTANT TO ADMIT IN SO MANY WORDS. HOWEVER, IT WOULD BE FAR BETTER TO ACKNOWLEDGE THIS IN SPELLING OUT THE FUNCTIONS OF THE PRESENT PERMANENT COUNCIL, ALTHOUGH WE HAVE TO REMEMBER THE FAILURE TO ACHIEVE THIS VERY THING DURING THE 1966-67 MEETINGS ON CHARTER REFORM.

5. OUR VIEW HAS BEEN THAT THE PRESENT PERMANENT COUNCIL SHOULD BE STRENGTHENED. IN ADDITION TO POLITICAL AND JURIDICAL FUNCTIONS, WE BELIEVE IT SHOULD PLAY A STRONGER CENTRAL, " BOARD OF DIRECTORS" ROLE IN THE ORGANIZATION MORE ALONG THE LINES OF THE OLD OAS COUNCIL, E. G. IN OVERALL COORDINATION OF THE COUNCILS AND OTHER ORGANS, IN GENERAL SUPERVISION OF THE SECRETARIAT AND

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BUDGET AND, BY DELEGATION , IN SERVING AS ALTER EGO FOR THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY BETWEEN SESSIONS. WE ALSO BELIEVE IT WOULD MAKE SENSE TO ELIMINATE THE ARTIFICIAL DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE PERMANENT COUNCIL AND THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE AND TO TREAT THE LATTER' S PREPARATORY AND OTHER CENTRAL FUNCTIONS AS PERTAINING TO THE PERMANENT COUNCIL PER SE.

6. OUR BASIC THINKING WITH RESPECT TO THE CENTRAL ROLE OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL SEEMS TO CORRESPOND TO THAT OF COLOMBIA, FOR ONE, WHICH SPEAKS IN TERMS OF A STRENGTHENED PERMANENT COUNCIL HAVING THE POWERS OF THE OLD OAS COUNCIL RESTORED TO IT AND SERVING IN EFFECT AS THE " PERMANENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE" OF THE GENERAL

ASSEMBLY.

7. THIS LEADS US TO THE QUESTION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ITSELF AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH IT COULD PLAY A MORE SIGNIFICANT POLICY ROLE BEFITTING THE " SUPREME ORGAN" OF THE OAS AND THE ATTENTION OF FOREIGN MINISTERS. TO SOME DEGREE THIS INVOLVES THE EXTENT TO WHICH IT COULD BE RELIEVED OF THOSE CENTRAL HOUSEKEEPING RESPONSIBILITIES PREVIOUSLY DECIDED BY THE OLD OAS COUNCIL -- SOME OF WHICH MIGHT BE RETURNED TO A STRENGTHENED PERMANENT
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COUNCIL AND OTHERS OF WHICH MIGHT BE BROUGHT INTO REDUCED FOCUS BY PLACING GREATER EMPHASIS AND RELIANCE ON COMPLETED PREPARATORY WORK AT THE COUNCIL LEVEL. OTHER MEMBER GOVERNMENTS (BESIDES COLOMBIA) HAVE FROM TIME TO TIME EXPRESSED UNHAPPINESS WITH THE DIVISION OF LABOR WORKED OUT IN THE 1967 CHARTER REFORMS, AND IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO KNOW WHAT ECHOES OF THIS YOU HAVE HEARD IN LIMA AND WHETHER ANY CONCRETE SUGGESTIONS HAVE EMERGED.

8. WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN HAVING YOUR REACTIONS TO THE FOREGOING.

ROGERS

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